

Review of Re-entry to the Register Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards Consultation

Owner: Accreditation
Audience: Stakeholders
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Executive summary

The Re-entry to the register Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2014 is undergoing review and development as part of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council's (ANMAC) cyclical review process. This will enable ANMAC to revise the standards to align them with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) approved Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (RNAS) 2019 and other ANMAC return to practice accreditation standards. The proposed draft standards have a minor name change for consistency with the name of NMBA's return to practice policy. The proposed draft standards are entitled Re-entry to practice Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards (RTP-RN).

The RTP-RN Accreditation Standards are used to accredit and assess programs of study offered to previously registered Registered Nurses who no longer meet the NMBA's Recency of Practice Registration Standard¹. The NMBA is responsible for assessing and referring suitable candidates to an RTP-RN program.

This consultation paper outlines how stakeholders can submit feedback on the proposed standards. ANMAC asks stakeholders to share the paper among their networks to support wide-ranging consultation.

Aim of the review.

The primary aim of ANMAC's cyclical review process is to ensure that accreditation standards are:

- contemporary and aligned with emerging research, policy, and relevant industry guidance
- able to ensure that nurses are suitably educated and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner to the required NMBA standards for practice
- acceptable to the profession and relevant stakeholders
- supportive of innovation in the education of health practitioners
- acceptable to the community in supporting safe, accessible, quality care.

This review is to align RTP-RN Accreditation Standards with the NMBA approved RNAS 2019 and other NMBA approved re-entry accreditation standards.

The review will be conducted in line with ANMAC's, [Protocol for the review of nursing and midwifery accreditation standards](#), which is underpinned by the objectives of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS). These objectives are to:

- provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered
- facilitate the provision of high-quality education and training of health practitioners
- enable the continuous development of a flexible, responsive, and sustainable Australian health workforce and to enable innovation in the education of, and service delivered by, health practitioners.

This review process will be guided by NRAS's guiding principles of transparency, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness.

Consultation process

The Registered Nurse Accreditation Committee (RNAC) is overseeing the review and acting as an Education Reference Group (ERG). The ERG differs slightly in representation from a professional reference group (PRG) discussed in the protocol for review of nursing and midwifery accreditation standards. RNAC

¹ Recency of Practice: Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia; 2017. Available from: <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/registration-standards/recency-of-practice.aspx>.

membership includes experienced nursing academics in nurse education and clinicians. The ERG reports to ANMAC's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

ERG Members are:

Professor Jane Conway (Chair) - Discipline Lead Nursing. Associate Dean Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of New England

Assoc. Prof. Leeanne Heaton (Deputy Chair) - Deputy Dean Nursing, Office of the Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Western Sydney University

Professor Rhonda Wilson - Professor of Nursing and Deputy Head of School – Central Coast School of Nursing and Midwifery | Faculty of Health and Medicine, University of Newcastle

Dr Ingrid Brooks - Senior Lecturer, Head of Campus (Clayton), Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University

Professor Tracey Moroney - Head, School of Nursing, Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health, University of Wollongong

Professor Karen Clark-Burg - Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery, The University of Notre Dame

Assoc Prof. Lauren McTier - Associate Head of School (Teaching and Learning), School of Nursing and Midwifery, Deakin University

Dr Margaret Gatling—Director Accreditation Services, ANMAC.

Development of the proposed standards includes the following steps:

- mapping and alignment of the ANMAC Re-entry to the register Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2014 with the Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2019
- adaptation of key criteria to reflect content shared across ANMAC's re-entry accreditation standards
- review and editing of proposed standards by the ERG. The proposed Re-entry to practice Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards are now presented in this consultation paper. Content found in this paper will also support stakeholders' consideration of key concepts relevant to the review of these standards and provide information to support stakeholder submission of feedback.

ANMAC asks that stakeholders share this consultation paper among their networks to support wide-ranging consultation.

How stakeholders can participate

Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback by written submission. The consultation will be open for 30 business days.

Written submissions must include the stakeholder's name and contact details (phone, email, and address). They can be emailed to ANMAC at standardsreview@anmac.org.au

All written submissions will be published on ANMAC's website unless the stakeholder has asked for the submission to remain confidential.

Material supplied in confidence should be clearly marked 'In confidence' and be provided as a separate attachment to non-confidential material.

Consultation questions

Question 1

Do the proposed accreditation standards enable education providers to design and deliver a program of study that ensures graduates, seeking to return to practice have the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the NMBA registered nurse standards for practice? Please provide an explanation for your answer.

Question 2

Should any criteria be added? Please identify and provide an explanation for your answer.

Question 3

Should any criteria be removed? Please identify and provide an explanation for your answer.

Question 4

Are the proposed workplace experience placement hours sufficient to ensure competence to return to practice as a registered nurse?

Question 5

Please provide any other feedback about the structure and/or content of the proposed standards.

Proposed standards

The proposed RTP-RN accreditation standards presented in Table 1 are aligned to the NMBA approved Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2019.

The Re-entry to Practice Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards are used to assess and accredit programs of study offered to previously registered Registered Nurses who no longer meet the National Board's Recency of Practice Registration Standard. Entry into programs of study require a letter of referral from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency on behalf of the NMBA.

Table 1: Proposed Re-entry Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards 2021

STANDARD 1 SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC
1.1 The program's guiding principle is safety of the public.
1.2 The program is delivered in Australia to prepare graduates for safe and ethical practice.
1.3 The program's admission requirements are fair, equitable and transparent. Before making an offer for enrolment, education providers inform applicants of the requirements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. meet the program's inherent requirements b. provide a current NMBA letter of referral stating eligibility for a re-entry to practice program when applying c. meet the requirements of health services where professional experience placements (PEP) occur d. register with the NMBA on program completion.
1.4 The education provider ensures that organisations in which students undertake PEP have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. evidence-based quality and safety policies and processes that meet relevant jurisdictional requirements and standards b. registered nurses who are prepared for the supervisory role and able to supervise and assess students during all PEP

STANDARD 1 SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC
c. relevant registered health practitioners available to support collaborative teaching and learning opportunities in interprofessional settings.
1.5 Students are registered with the NMBA before starting their first PEP.
1.6 The education provider has processes in place to manage students with identified impairments that, in the course of PEP, may place the public at risk. These processes include procedures for mandatory reporting where required.
1.7 The program's progression policies and rules ensure that only students who have demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skills required for safe practice are eligible for PEP.

STANDARD 2 GOVERNANCE
2.1 The academic governance arrangements for the program of study include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. current registration by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) as an Australian university or other higher education provider offering an entry to practice registered nurse program. b. TEQSA as an Australian university or other higher education provider not offering an entry to practice registered nurse program that has a formal agreement in place with an Australian university or other higher education provider with current TEQSA registration and offering an entry to practice registered nurse program. c. Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as an Australian registered training organisation that has a formal governance arrangement in place with an Australian university or other higher education provider, which has current registration with TEQSA and offers an entry to practice registered nurse program.
2.2 The education provider conducting the program has a governance structure that ensures the head of discipline is a registered nurse with the NMBA, with no conditions or undertakings on their registration relating to performance or conduct and holds a relevant post-graduate qualification. The head of discipline is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. academic oversight of the program b. promoting high-quality teaching and learning experiences for students to enable graduate competence c. ensuring staff and students are indemnified for relevant activities undertaken as part of program requirements.
2.3 The education provider undertakes consultation into the design and ongoing management of the program from external representatives of the nursing profession, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, consumers, students, carers, and other relevant stakeholders.
2.4 Policies confirming that credit transfer or the recognition of prior learning are not available to students seeking entry into the proposed program.
2.5 The program's quality improvement mechanisms incorporate evaluation information from a variety of sources and address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. risk assessment of student learning environments b. student evaluations c. internal and external, academic and health professional evaluations d. evidence-based developments in health professional education e. evidence-based developments in health and health care.

STANDARD 3 PROGRAM OF STUDY
3.1 The program of study is undertaken in Australia.
3.2 The program of study meets the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) requirements for a minimum level 7 award program and having been issued with a statement of completion and/or attainment by the governing Australian university or higher education provider.

STANDARD 3 PROGRAM OF STUDY
3.3 The curriculum document articulates the nursing and educational philosophies and their practical implementation into the program of study.
3.4 Teaching and learning reflects contemporary practices in nursing, health, and education, and responds to emerging trends based on research, technology, and other forms of evidence.
3.5 The program's content and subject learning outcomes ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. achievement of the NMBA Registered nurse standards for practice b. integrated knowledge of regional, national, and global health priorities, including mental health and care of the older person c. integrated knowledge of safety and quality standards as they relate to health care d. integrated knowledge of care across the lifespan and across contexts of nursing practice e. equivalence in all delivery modes in which the program is offered.
3.6 The program's content and subject learning outcomes integrate principles of intraprofessional and interprofessional learning and practice.
3.7 The program's content and subject learning outcomes embed principles of diversity, culture, inclusion and cultural safety for all people.
3.8 The program's content and subject learning outcomes support the development of research skills that include searching and reviewing research and other evidence for translation into practice.
3.9 The program's content and subject learning outcomes support the development of student knowledge and skills in pharmacotherapeutics and quality use of medicines. This includes the supply and administration of medicines.
3.10 The program includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history, culture and health taught as a discrete subject and based on the Nursing and Midwifery Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework b. content relevant to health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is embedded throughout the program.
3.11 The program includes content and sequencing that incorporates simulated learning experience to prepare students for PEP.
3.12 The Education provider ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the program incorporates a minimum of 80 to 240 hours of quality PEP exclusive of simulation activities b. PEP is underpinned by contractual arrangements between education providers and PEP providers.
3.13 The program's resources are sufficient to facilitate student achievement of the NMBA Registered nurse standards for practice, with attention to human and physical resources supporting all teaching and learning environments, including simulated practice and PEP.
3.14 Staff teaching into the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. are qualified and experienced to deliver the subjects they teach b. are registered nurses where the subject relates to nursing practice c. hold one qualification higher than the program of study being taught.

STANDARD 4 STUDENT EXPERIENCE
4.1 Program information provided to students is relevant, timely, transparent, and accessible.
4.2 Student academic learning needs are identified and supported by the education provider.
4.3 Students are informed of, and have access to, grievance and appeals processes.
4.4 Students are informed of, and have access to, pastoral and/or personal support services.
4.5 Students are represented on program advisory and decision-making committees.
4.6 Student experiences have equity and diversity principles observed and promoted.

STANDARD 4 STUDENT EXPERIENCE

4.7 Student experiences across all teaching and learning environments are monitored and evaluated regularly with outcomes informing program quality improvement.

STANDARD 5 STUDENT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The program's learning outcomes and assessment strategies are aligned.

5.2 The program's subject learning outcomes, with associated subject assessments, are clearly mapped to the NMBA Registered nurse standards for practice.

5.3 The integrity of the program's theoretical and clinical assessments is ensured using contemporary, validated assessment tools, modes of assessment, sampling, and moderation processes.

5.4 The program's assessments include the appraisal of competence in pharmacotherapeutics and the quality use of medicines.

5.5 The program has formative and summative assessments that enhance learning and inform student progression. The summative assessment appraises competence against the NMBA Registered nurse standards for practice before successful completion of the program.

5.6 The education provider is ultimately accountable for the assessment of students in relation to their PEP.